



# Tasmanian Government Submission

## Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use

August 2016

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# I Introduction

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the Australian Government's leadership and profile-raising of information as a strategic asset. In particular, the Prime Minister's *Public Data Policy Statement* and the roadmap outlined in the *Public Sector Data Management Report* have articulated an agenda that resonates well with efforts in recent years to build the Tasmanian Government's information assets and capability.

Governments collect and hold large amounts of information about their activities, the legislation they enact, the assets they manage (including infrastructure and human resources), the services they deliver, and the people that use them.

This 'administrative data' takes a variety of forms and is usually spread across divisions and departments; stored in IT systems that are not designed to readily share information; and primarily used for operational purposes closely associated with the collection.

In the past, only a small proportion of government data has been released for public information, usually under Crown copyright (which restricts reuse) and in formats that are 'human readable' but not 'machine readable'.

With the rapid generation of digital information, the speed of processing, low-cost storage options, and access literally 'in the palm of your hand', governments need to respond to community expectations for mobile, easy-access information and services.

Governments that have responded positively to this 'information age' have looked to build and promote their 'open government' credentials – emphasising transparency, acknowledging the public's right to government information, and recognising the potential public and commercial value of making government information more 'open'.

This submission outlines key whole-of-government; multi-agency; and single agency initiatives that are improving information management, availability and use in Tasmania.

## 2 Tasmanian Government – Strategy, Policy and Protocol

### 2.1 *Stats Matter Strategy*

Tasmania is building a whole-of-government strategic information framework through the [Stats Matter Strategy](#), to identify our most important information assets, assess the quality of the underlying data and build the capability to manage, use and - where appropriate - publish data.

Stats Matter is a long-term, whole-of-government strategy to build Tasmanian Government statistical assets and capability.

The Strategy was developed under the partnership between the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), to address 'pain points' in the use and management of information that were seen to be limiting efficiency and effectiveness in policy and service delivery.

The identified pain points relate to the burden of reporting, antiquated data management systems, lack of spatially enabled data, lack of statistical capability, a need for greater collaboration within and between departments, poor data quality and data gaps, limited awareness of whole-of-government and other departmental drivers, poor discoverability of data, limited performance evaluation and the need to promote a culture of valuing data.

The vision of the Strategy is for better Government decisions informed by quality data and sound statistical practice for the benefit of all Tasmanians.

The major actions outlined in the Strategy are to:

- identify and manage critical data assets;
- establish a toolkit of resources to build data quality and support capability;
- develop open data and related mechanisms to make sharing and publication of statistical information easier;
- strengthen collaboration across government to make the best use of statistical information; and
- develop a Tasmanian Government statistical capability framework.

Implementation of the major actions to date has involved a mix of central coordination on whole-of-government components like progressing the open data agenda (refer to Section 2.2) and establishing the online toolkit; and department-based initiatives such as the Strategic Information Review project (refer to Section 3.4) to pilot processes for identifying statistical assets and assessing data quality and related capability.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC)'s Office of eGovernment is coordinating implementation of Stats Matter. The Strategy was released in 2013 and updated in 2015 to reference the development and implementation of the *Tasmanian Government Open Data Policy*.

## 2.2 Open Data Policy

Premier Will Hodgman MP hosted an Open Data Roundtable in May 2014, attended by all Heads of Agencies with representatives from the ABS and the University of Tasmania (UTAS).

At the Roundtable, guest speaker Chris Vein (World Bank, Chief Innovation Officer) defined open data as "data that can be fully used, reused and redistributed by anyone for any purpose".

The [Tasmanian Government Open Data Policy](#) has been developed to:

- facilitate the release of appropriate, high-value datasets by Tasmanian Government departments to the public;
- make explicit the Tasmanian Government's commitment to open data and open government;
- create a practical policy framework to embed open data principles across Tasmanian Government operations;
- foster understanding of open data priorities for government, industry and community; and
- support the objective of the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

The Policy is a principles-based document that states that data should be: open by design; protected where required; free where appropriate; prioritised; discoverable; usable; primary; timely; trusted and authoritative; subject to least restrictive licensing; and engaging.

Consistent with the Council for the Australian Federation (CAF) Principles on Open Data, the Policy draws on open data approaches in other Australian jurisdictions, particularly the *NSW Government Open Data Policy*.

Publication of open data supports the objectives of Tasmania's *Right to Information Act 2009*, and the underlying principle that the information held by Tasmanian public authorities belongs to the people of the State, and has been collected for them and on their behalf. The Policy also complements the Government's recent Right to Information (RTI) policy to share more Government information with the public by publishing certain responses to RTI requests within 48 hours of release to the applicant.

Tasmanian Government departments releasing publications and specific datasets under open licences, include: the Department of State Growth; the Department of Education (including the Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office) and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment through its suite of spatial datasets available on the Land Information System Tasmania (LIST) website at <http://listdata.thelist.tas.gov.au/opendata/>

Apart from the LIST, Tasmanian Government agencies are currently publishing open data to the data.gov.au portal, with plans to establish a Tasmanian Government open data portal in the future.

Implementation of the Policy will shortly involve consultation on demand for open data and the information needs of Tasmanian business, research and community organisations. This consultation will assist Government departments to identify and prioritise high value data suitable for release.

Sponsorship of, and participation in, the annual GovHack competition is also recognised as an important opportunity for the Tasmanian Government to support local IT innovators while at the same time, learning more about the value and potential uses of government data.

## 2.3 *Sharing Information*

A central aim of both the *Stats Matter Strategy* and the *Tasmanian Government Open Data Policy* is maximising the accessibility and quality of government information to support informed decision making and innovation.

This aligns with the findings of the *Public Sector Data Management Report*, released by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on 3 December 2015, which notes "the potential of public sector data to drive innovation, efficiency, productivity and economic growth" and the critical role of the states and territories as custodians of "a substantial amount of high-value data".

Within government, the duty to responsibly protect information is balanced by a duty to share information where such exchange is appropriate and would support more effective and efficient policy development and service delivery. Encouraging greater sharing and use of information also provides a more conducive environment for identifying and prioritising the publication of high value open data.

Transitioning from a historical position of data exchange by exception to one where appropriate data exchange occurs by default requires:

- a will to exchange, i.e. a culture that supports information exchange;
- the authority to exchange, i.e. confidence that information exchange is consistent with relevant laws and legislation; and
- the capability to exchange, i.e. having in place the infrastructure, processes and knowledge that facilitate information exchange.

The Secretary of DPAC hosted an all-agency executive forum titled *#OKtoshare Information - within, between and beyond government* on 27 July 2016. This forum provided high-level leadership to engage the senior executive from all agencies in building a culture within government to promote positive information sharing practices. The forum included the launch of a new *Administrative Data Exchange Protocol for Tasmania* as a foundation component of the Government's information sharing agenda.

## 2.4 *Administrative Data Exchange Protocol for Tasmania (ADEPT)*

An [\*Administrative Data Exchange Protocol for Tasmania \(ADEPT\)\*](#) has been developed to provide the authority, build the capability and support cultural change to improve the availability and use of data by Tasmanian Government agencies.

The ADEPT Vision is that the Tasmanian Government values and manages data as a strategic asset, and shares information within, between and beyond government for the benefit of the Tasmanian community.

ADEPT contains the following principles:

1. there are clear roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in the exchange of data;
2. data from different sources is able to be exchanged and used appropriately;
3. provisos of data privacy, confidentiality, security and intellectual property are respected and protected; and
4. data is responsibly and transparently exchanged within and between agencies to inform policy development and the continuous improvement of services.

The challenge for agencies to embrace data sharing as a norm, is partly attributed to the perceptions of legislative constraints under the various privacy protection legislation. ADEPT will provide guidance and improve awareness of how agencies can share and exchange data more intuitively and with a clearer understanding of the legislative environment.

Following its launch at the end of July 2016, ADEPT will be trialed in all Tasmanian Government departments over a six-month period and then reviewed in early 2017. Feedback from this trial period will inform any additional content or support required to ensure ADEPT can be effectively implemented across government and form the basis of positive information sharing practices going forward.

ADEPT may be of interest to the Productivity Commission in the context of the *Data Availability and Use - Issues Paper 'Questions on other restrictions'* on page 27.

### **3. Sharing Data Within, Between and Beyond Agencies**

Effective social policy and associated service delivery increasingly requires information to flow across agency boundaries and requires new partnerships and processes to provide policy solutions and coordinate effective service delivery. The following initiatives outline where and how this is being progressed, both between Tasmanian agencies, and between the Tasmanian and the Australian Governments.

#### **3.1 *Safe Homes, Safe Families***

Effective cross-government collaboration is critical in addressing family violence in our community. *Safe Homes, Safe Families* is the Tasmanian Government's coordinated, whole-of-government action plan to respond to family violence. The Action Plan, developed in consultation with stakeholders, including the community, outlines an additional \$25.57 million in Government funding to new and direct actions over a four year period.

A central element of the Action Plan is for a new cross-agency Safe Families Coordination Unit to be established. The Unit has been established and is responsible for perpetrator profiling and monitoring, and the coordination of victim support. A key responsibility is the timely collation of new and existing police, justice, health, education, child protection and other relevant information from across government.

A separate element of *Safe Homes, Safe Families* involves creating an integrated family violence dataset linking 'common-client' information from existing datasets maintained by individual agencies. Once established this dataset will facilitate the evaluation of programs implemented through *Safe Homes, Safe Families* and other initiatives as well as supporting broader government and academic research of the causes, impacts and costs of family violence.

#### **3.2 *Joined Up Human Services***

The Tasmanian Government is committed to delivering a more joined up service and support system for vulnerable individuals and families, especially those with complex support needs.

The *Joined Up Human Services* project aims to make it easier for Tasmanians to navigate all human services; minimise the information people have to repeatedly provide; and have lead support coordinators work with clients to build their resilience and increase self-capacity.

Under the *Joined-Up Human Services* initiative, new service and client management models targeting improved program efficiency and enhanced community resilience will be piloted. More effective information exchange between the various government and non-government stakeholders will underpin associated service delivery reforms and evaluation.

#### **3.3 *Strong Families – Safe Kids***

A comprehensive Redesign of Child Protection Services in Tasmania commenced in August 2015. The State Government is committed to improving the child protection system in Tasmania to better protect our most vulnerable children.

The *Strong Families – Safe Kids Implementation Plan*, released in May 2016, will change the way government and non-government agencies work collaboratively to deliver services to improve the wellbeing of all Tasmanian children. The Plan recognises the need to build a culture “where the sharing of information across key service agencies is the default and where retaining information within a service is clearly based on protecting the interest of the child.”

### 3.4 Strategic Information Review (DHHS)

The Strategic Information Review (SIR) was a collaborative project based in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that drew expertise from several departments and the ABS to progress key Stats Matter actions in alignment with the *One Health System* and other reforms in Tasmania’s health and human services sector. The project highlighted the link between improvements in the quality and use of statistical information, and better policy and service delivery outcomes for Tasmanian communities.

Conduct of the Review in DHHS enabled:

- Identification and quality assessment of Critical Data Assets
- Assessment of key business areas’ general capability to produce, manage and use statistical information
- Review of current arrangements for information governance, including processes and accountabilities
- Facilitation of secure and transparent data integration
- Introduction of improved practices for the management, use and disposal of patient/client information
- Enhancement of spatial capability and analysis.

Although these projects directly related to DHHS, the underpinning aim of the SIR project was a practical application of the Stats Matter Strategy. As a result, key outputs from the project can be applied across other Tasmanian departments.

Recommendations contained in the final SIR Report were endorsed by DHHS. Central to these recommendations was the establishment of an Information Coordination and Strategy Unit (ICSU) within DHHS to lead best practice information management and help DHHS become a more data-driven agency. Recruitment for the Unit is currently underway.

### 3.5 Education - TETIA

In 2013 the Tasmanian Department of Education (DoE) was approached by the ABS to support a collaborative study between the two organisations. This study was to be an initiative of a new unit led by the ABS, [Transforming Education and Training Information in Australia](#) (TETIA).

The ABS proposal was to trial data linkage studies using a range of Tasmanian education and training data. The purpose was to develop a study to test the quality of different data linkage methodologies and provide preliminary statistical analysis. Data sources included a range of areas (Early childhood education, school enrolment data, NAPLAN data Australian Early Development Index and Vocational Education and Training data). The final study, [Factors influencing early childhood development in Tasmania](#), was released in October 2015.

The study combined educational information and data (preschool participation, proportion of developmentally vulnerable children by characteristics, physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication and general knowledge) with ABS statistical data (parental labour force, highest parental education, parental employment status, number of children in family, weekly household income, SEIFA, remoteness). The results, as outlined in the conclusion of the report, provided insights into factors influencing early childhood development that were extremely useful for policy development and decision-making. They also pointed out the value of data linkage and data sharing in this format and

*... how integrated data, in particular socioeconomic information from the Census of Population and Housing and information about developmental vulnerability from the Australian Early Development Census, can add new and rich information to the education evidence base for policy and research. Integrating data has the additional benefits of being less resource intensive than collecting new information through surveys or designed administrative collections as well as encouraging collaborative work and developing partnerships between the agencies involved in the work. (p.6 Factors influencing early childhood development in Tasmania – link above).*

Tasmanian DoE officers involved in this study valued the analysis of a range of student and household factors that had not been previously available and provided quality, rich information for policy purposes and for both school and system practices. They also indicated that it was a way of enhancing the evidence base available for educational policy in Tasmania (and Australia) in a cost effective and efficient way without increasing the burden on the general public.

Participation in this trial study was facilitated by both organisations (DoE and ABS) working together to overcome impediments to implementing data linkage and data sharing processes. A useful application of the report from this inquiry would be for some focused work on identifying impediments and challenges to allow data sharing and data linkage between jurisdictions, and between jurisdictions and external agencies.

A strong partnership has been established and Tasmania places a high value on the ABS being an independent body that has clear protocols around both the protection of data provided by custodians and ensuring data is used strictly for the purposes agreed. Such governance arrangements around the management of data are considered essential to facilitate greater information sharing across jurisdictions.



### 3.6 Land Information Web Services

A major output of the Spatial Information Foundations Project (see below, *Building Infrastructure to Support Better Use of Information – Spatial Information*) was the LIST web services framework. (<http://services.thelist.tas.gov.au/>). A web service is a software system which supports communication between one computer and another computer over a network. The LIST web services enable users to access and use authoritative spatial data sets from the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) in a variety of ways through standard internet protocols. This technology has vastly improved data sharing within DPIPWE, Government agencies, industry and the community. As an example it allows emergency services organisations to stream live data to the LIST (and vice versa) without the traditional human resource overheads and barriers of physically exchanging data.

A web services framework and delivery model like the LIST, and its data sharing benefits, may be of interest to the Commission in the context of the *Data Availability and Use - Issues Paper* 'Questions on collection and release of public sector data' on page 14 – with particular reference to ABS data holdings.

### 3.7 Research Partners

The Tasmanian Government has maintained a high level partnership with UTAS for many years. UTAS centres that feature collaboration with key Tasmanian Government agencies around information sharing include:

- [Tasmanian Data Linkage Unit](#) (Menzies Institute for Medical Research)
- [Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment](#)
- [Sense-T](#)

## 4 Legislative Environment

The Tasmanian Government Open Data Policy supports the objectives of the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Tas) and one of its underlying principles is that information collected by public authorities is collected for and on behalf of the people of Tasmania.

In 2015, the Government instructed agencies to share more information with the public by:

- publishing selected responses to Right to Information (RTI) requests for assessed disclosure of information within 48 hours of release to the applicant;
- routinely disclosing information twice a year (April and October) including Ministerial expenditure and departmental workforce statistics and expenditure, telecommunications expenditure and consultancies and contracts awarded; and
- routinely disclosing information on changes to organisational structure and functions; departmental governance policies; and major program initiatives and reviews.

While the Right to Information Act is generally seen as supporting greater transparency and openness, agencies perceive Tasmania's privacy legislation as more often a barrier. The following perspective from DHHS illustrates the challenges.

Privacy legislation relating to sharing information in care settings, and also in the research and service planning environment, is complex and open to interpretation. This has created an ongoing sense of confusion over a number of years among professionals and clients which has been compounded by each individual State Government agency seeking legal clarification of issues.

The Tasmanian Government, local councils and UTAS are personal information custodians under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*, whereas most service providers in the non-government sector are required to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. In addition, not all non-government providers have funding agreements with the State Government that include a clear personal information contract. In such cases the non-government service provider is not a personal information custodian under the *Personal Information Protection Act*.

There is also a lack of uniformity in the way that consent for information sharing is gathered from clients and this creates uncertainty for practitioners and clients at the client-service interface, and also for professionals who use data to inform research and service planning.

In addition to this confusion, there are information sharing provisions within other Tasmanian legislation such as the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, the *Family Violence Act 2004*, and the *Mental Health Act 2013*. The *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act* includes information sharing provisions which over-ride other legislation in certain circumstances (such as there being the risk of, or actual, abuse and/or neglect of a child or young person). In such circumstances personal information can be shared without the consent of the client. The *Youth Justice Act 1997* also includes particular confidentiality provisions which need consideration in ensuring privacy for clients.

The *Mental Health Act* includes circumstances under which personal information may be disclosed. In administering the *Family Violence Act* the stated object is that the safety, psychological wellbeing and interests of people affected by family violence be the paramount considerations (refer to Section 3.1). Clearly, for people affected by family violence, being confident that their information is being shared cautiously is imperative.

In order to assure safety and quality, the *Health Act 1997* provides for members of suitably administered safety and quality committees to discuss sensitive information about the safety and quality of systems, while also providing statutory immunity for those members. The provision does not extend to those providing human services, nor is it included in any other current legislation.

Finally, other aspects of the legislative environment pertaining to information sharing relate to intellectual property and the alignment of copyright with policy objectives and risk management around information sharing. We note that intellectual property is the subject of a separate current inquiry by the Productivity Commission.

## 5 Building Infrastructure to Support Better Use of Information

### 5.1 Spatial Information

Tasmania has a whole-of-government online infrastructure called the Land Information System Tasmania (LIST) that helps people find and use information about land and property in Tasmania (refer to Section 6.1). The LIST includes a free online map application (LISTmap); a data directory - including over 61 datasets published under Creative Commons open licences (LISTdata); and a Common Operating Platform (COP).

The COP is a secure, web-based, spatially enabled application for use by Tasmanian emergency management agencies, to facilitate planning, situational awareness and better decision-making. Recent use of the COP has proven its benefits not only for time-critical management of emergency events associated with floods in northern Tasmania, but also in understanding and communicating impacts and supporting the coordination of multi-agency input to the recovery process for affected areas.

The Spatial Information Foundations Project which delivered the new LIST Infrastructure and subsequent LIST outputs won several Government and Industry awards at State, National and International levels.

Spatial information sharing is also being progressed through *Spatial Discovery*, a collaborative program between DPIWRE and DoE with additional assistance from UTAS. In conjunction with DoE's *Technology in Schools - GPS program*, *Spatial Discovery* was a joint winner in the People and Community category of the Tasmanian Spatial Excellence Awards announced in September 2015. It was also Highly Commended in the same category at the Asia Pacific Spatial Excellence Awards in April 2016. The judges commended both programs for delivering content on the importance of spatial information in a fun way and acknowledged the commitment to ongoing maintenance and support of the resources. *Spatial Discovery* provides teachers with tools and ideas to integrate spatial technology techniques in the classroom delivery of a range of curriculum content and is also suitable for anyone wanting to learn more about the importance of 'location information' for effective decision making in modern society.

DPIWRE's Water and Marine Resources has also made data publicly available since 2006 through the Water Information System Tasmania (WIST) portal at [wrt.tas.gov.au/wist](http://wrt.tas.gov.au/wist) and data feeds from spatialised data sets to other programs e.g. SenseT and the Bureau of Meteorology under a Creative Commons licence. This will be supplemented in the near future with an additional portal optimised for mobile devices and supporting web services for business to business data access.

### 5.2 Education – Edi

Edi (Education Information) is an Australian-first, major educational initiative established in Tasmania designed to provide access for teachers, support, corporate and leadership staff to individual student and school data.

It provides a single student record for each student, generating data to allow for quick and simple identification of individual student needs, as well as providing data-based information for school leaders and system leaders around performance at student, class, school, programme and system levels.

Edi is a portal that provides school and departmental staff with instant access to school and individual student data through the one entry place. It is accessible to school staff anytime, anywhere and by any device (including phones). It provides data for individual students that is both historical and real time, allowing teachers not only to access longitudinal data right back to a student's initial school entry, but also to access up to date information about attendance, behaviour and academic results (edi data is loaded from source systems every night). The portal has been recognised as an Australian leader, having won two Tasmanian awards in 2014 and 2015 and a merit award at the Australian iAwards in August 2015. DoE also won the 2015 Prime Minister's Gold Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management for edi.

Since its inception edi has been consistently updated to address user feedback. Financial and Human Resource links and reports have been added to provide information for Principals and a recent update at the beginning of term two 2016, has provided class dashboards for all teachers that contain student records for easy access. Developmental work to include student and school borrowing data from all Tasmanian libraries and facilities is nearing completion.

Feedback from stakeholders is that the implementation and ongoing improvements to the edi portal have brought positive, authentic change to practices in schools, as well as benefits to DoE as a whole through the capacity of the system to enable shaping of policy. The ability to access more data in real-time is leading to more cohesive, strategic thinking, more consideration of broader opportunities and interconnections between the business units within DoE. Use of systemic data provided through edi is enabling both school and systemic improvement.

When a student transfers between government schools, leaders and teachers have immediate access to data about that student's history. Data contained in edi is currently only available about Tasmanian government schools and students.

## **6 Identifying High Value Government Datasets**

Asset management systems and processes are routinely applied to government physical assets to ensure a good understanding of the value, location, availability, risks, maintenance requirements and associated responsibilities. Information assets are one of the key inputs to inform service delivery, policy development, strategic planning, program evaluation, budget management and the high level decisions associated with the business of government. However, to date, little of the rigour afforded to physical assets has been applied to the management of information assets.

Stats Matter's Major Action 1 is to "identify and manage critical data assets", with sub-actions being designed to:

- Identify and agree a set of critical data assets; implement a governance structure and develop management plans to support them

- Review and align state and national performance reporting requirements where practical to reduce the burden of reporting
- Ensure data assets generally support performance measurement and program evaluation.

Identifying Critical Data Assets (CDAs) was a key element of the SIR project (refer to Section 3.4), where it was determined that a CDA should include the data, processes and people that are required to collect, maintain and disseminate an important statistic, outcome or performance measurement.

Three criteria have been developed to assist the identification of CDA, based on an assessment of whether a data asset is:

1. Used to support policy and program development and to monitor/evaluate service delivery and policy implementation, e.g. State Budget performance measures, vaccinations and infant health, school attendance, geo-location of services.
2. Required by Tasmanian Government or Australian Government legislation, e.g. land titles information, births deaths and marriages; and
3. Necessary to meet reporting obligations to bodies external to Tasmanian Government, e.g. the Council of Australian Governments and other national agreements (particularly those linked to Commonwealth funding), ABS, Productivity Commission (RoGS), Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

These criteria usually relate to reporting arrangements which require collection and periodic reporting of data on a set of agreed indicators. The criteria can have overlapping data requirements, for example reporting to RoGS and meeting a legislative requirement may draw data from the same source.

The criteria developed for CDAs may be of interest to the Productivity Commission in the context of the *Data Availability and Use - Issues Paper* 'Questions on high value public sector data' on page 14.

## 7 Conclusion

While some of the initiatives outlined in this submission are still in relatively early stages of implementation, conclusions can be drawn on common high level outcomes and benefits being sought, and the barriers that need to be overcome in order to realise these benefits.

Generally, the objectives being pursued under Tasmanian Government data sharing initiatives focus on:

- a will to exchange, i.e. to build a culture that supports information exchange;
- the authority to exchange, i.e. confidence that information exchange is consistent with relevant laws and legislation; and
- the capability to exchange, i.e. having in place the infrastructure, processes and knowledge that facilitate information exchange.

High-level leadership is considered essential to overcome a cultural reluctance within the State Service sector to share information. Barriers may arise because of risk aversion, perceptions that legislation prevents sharing, lack of confidence in data quality, or lack of trust. It takes clear, high-level direction and authorisation in order to get data-sharing initiatives up and running.

Political sponsorship combined with strong leadership from agency heads has established recent multi-agency initiatives such as *Safe Homes-Safe Families*, *Joined Up Human Services*, and *Strong Families-Safe Kids*. Longer-term agency initiatives involving new or enhanced data infrastructure, such as the LIST and *edi*, have clearly demonstrated recognition of the value of information and a sustained commitment from the relevant departmental executives.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the capacity of agencies and governments to participate in a truly open/big data environment has resource and investment implications. Without appropriate investment in the underpinning infrastructure and information management, the Tasmanian Government's ability to participate in and benefit from the new data sharing environment will rapidly hit limits.